

Appl. 09/824,878  
Art Unit : 3616  
Attorney Docket No. RP-00208-US4  
Examiner : CULBRETH, Eric D.

REMARKS

By this amendment claims 2, 24 and 121-130 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 23, 25 and 98 have been amended. No claims have been added. After entry of this amendment claims 1, 3-23, 25-120 and 131-136 will remain pending. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

In the Office Action Summary dated January 23, 2004, the Examiner allowed claims 50-97, 99-120 and 131-134, objected to claims 2, 3, 21, 22 and 24-27 and rejected claims 1, 4-6, 9, 17, 19, 23, 28-29, 32, 42, 44-48, 98, 121-123, 125-127, 129-130 and 135-136 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bernardi in view of Sheffer.

By the present amendment, Applicants are amending claim 1 to include therein the limitations of objected to claim 2 and canceling claim 2 in consequence. Claim 1 is now claim 2 rewritten in independent form; it should now be allowable as indicated by Examiner. Claims 3-22 depend, directly or indirectly, from amended claim 1, and should now be allowable as well.

Similarly, Applicants are amending claim 23 to include therein the limitations of objected to claim 24, and canceling claim 24 in consequence. Claim 23 is now claim 24 rewritten in independent form; it should now be allowable as indicated by Examiner. Claim 25 has been amended to depend from claim 23; and claims 26-49 already depended, directly or indirectly, from claim 23. All of these claims are now believed to be allowable.

Claims 50-97 were allowed by the Examiner and remain unchanged.

Claim 98 has been amended and depends from allowed claim 71. It is believed to be allowable.

Claims 99-120 were allowed by the Examiner and remain unchanged.

Claims 121-130 are cancelled.

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Claims 131-134 were allowed by the Examiner and remain unchanged.

Claim 135 remains unchanged but now depends from amended claim 1. Similarly, claim 136 remains unchanged but now depends from amended claim 23. Both are now believed to be allowable.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 3-23, 25-120 and 131-136 are allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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